

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claim 1 (previously presented): A composition for preventing or treating epithelial tissue damage comprising a substance that prevents or treats epithelial tissue damage associated with the expression of glucosylceramide synthase, comprising:

an RNA polynucleotide antisense to a sequence comprising the glucosylceramide synthase mRNA.

Claim 2 (previously presented): The substance according to claim 1, further comprising a cell containing the polynucleotide and a lower amount of the CD14 gene translation product than in similar cells lacking the polynucleotide.

Claim 3 (currently amended): The substance according to claim 1, wherein the polynucleotide is ~~an a cRNAi oligonucleotide~~.

Claim 4-5 (canceled).

Claim 6 (previously presented): A composition for preventing or treating epithelial tissue damage associated with the expression of glucosylceramide synthase comprising, a substance that prevents or treats epithelial tissue damage, comprising:

an RNA polynucleotide antisense to a sequence comprised by the glucosylceramide synthase mRNA in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

Claim 7 (currently amended): The composition according to claim 6, wherein the polynucleotide is ~~an a cRNAi oligonucleotide~~.

Claim 8 (previously presented): The composition of claim 6, further comprising a cell containing the polynucleotide and a lower amount of the CD14 gene translation product than in similar cells lacking the polynucleotide.

Claim 9-32 (canceled).